



Housing Commission Minutes [SUBJECT TO APPROVAL]

August 24, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was conducted in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-20-20 and N-35-20 and COVID-19 pandemic protocols

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Galvin called a teleconference meeting of the Housing Commission to order at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Kate Duggan, Karline Fischer, Zarina Kiziloglu, Neil Kripalani, Tony Soby, and Chairperson Jay Galvin

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Steve Hernandez, Housing Manager; Brian Dolan, Assistant City Manager; Ellen Clark, Director of Community Development; Jennifer Hagen, Associate Planner; Shweta Bonn, Senior Planner; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. Review and provide a recommendation for the draft housing sites selection criteria for the 6th Cycle (2023-2031) Housing Element Update

Mr. Hernandez introduced commissioners to Ellen Clark, Director of Community Development and advised that she would be leading this meeting on the review of draft housing sites election criteria for the 6th Cycle (2023-2031) Housing Element Update.

Ms. Clark advised the commission that work is proceeding on the 6th Cycle (2023-2031) Housing Element Update and along with other components needs to provide updated inventory information on sites that will be able to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA). She noted that based on early evaluation of sites zoned for residential development, it will be necessary for the city to identify more locations for that can be rezoned to allow for residential use that will include sites suitable for lower-income as well as market-rate housing. Included in this process staff is asking for input from the Housing Commission on criteria that will assist in being able to evaluate and rank identified potential sites that will help in analyzing these sites during the environmental review phase of the project.

Ms. Clark reviewed with the commission a PowerPoint presentation on the Housing Element Update

and Draft Housing Sites Selection Criteria noting that the presentation outline included: 1) Introduction to Sites Selection Process, 2) Draft Housing Sites Selection Criteria, 3) Questions, 4) Public Comment, and 5) Commission Discussion and Input. Commissioners were provided details of the Housing Element Components and the Update Process along with the Regional Housing Needs Allocations of:

1,750 units for very low-income
1,008 units for low-income
894 units for moderate income, and
2,313 for above income
5,965 total units

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Clark that the City of Pleasanton is required to identify adequate sites to meet RHNA that includes an existing inventory of property sites that are zoned for residential uses with the ability for additional housing units. She commented on six steps of the sites selection process overview that includes: 1) criteria for initial evaluation of sites, 2) completing land inventory/gap analysis by late September/October, 3) compiling a list of prospective sites by September/October, 4) completing an initial list of sites for CEQ by December, 5) conducting a CEQA analysis January-June 2022, and finally 6) August-December 2022 providing a final Housing Element Sites Inventory.

The Methodology and Guiding Principles were discussed by Ms. Clark along with the Draft Initial Criteria Scoring Framework and Scoring Categories. She noted that comments had been received in a joint letter from several agencies and from two members of the public. Commissioners were provided information about the Next Steps for this Housing Element Update that includes presentations to the Planning Commission and City Council and Public Workshops. Ms. Clark then asked Commissioners to review and provide comments on the criteria that should be used for the initial ranking, scoring and selection of sites that should be considered for the 6th Cycle (2023-2031) Housing Element Update.

Ms. Clark advised the commission that an email has been set up for the public to use with any questions they may have regarding the Housing Element, and that staff is now looking for input from the Housing Commission on the draft sites criteria pertaining to the ranking scoring and site selections.

At the recommendation of Mr. Hernandez, Chairperson Galvin opened the meeting for comments from the public and invited Becky Dennis to present her comments.

Ms. Dennis commented on communications sent to the commission and staff from herself and Jocelyn Combs regarding ideas they feel should be explored pertaining to this Housing Element Update such as air rights over commercial parking lots. She noted their previous involvement in Housing Elements that had included jobs, housing balance, traffic mitigations, and pollution prevention and that an important issue for this Housing Element Update must be climate change and how it affects everybody and progress that can be made in greenhouse gas reduction by providing Pleasanton service housing. Ms. Dennis further discussed the importance of providing housing near transit and not putting undue restrictions on people who want to stay in Pleasanton when they want to move from lower income housing to moderate housing.

Commissioners were informed by Ms. Dennis that she and Ms. Combs are happy to talk with the commission whenever needed and are glad to be involved in the process. She indicated that she personally has high hopes for this Housing Element.

Ms. Clark introduced commissioners to Lisa Wise Consulting (LWC) consultant members David Bergman and Jennifer Murillo and advised they are available to assist and answer any questions raised by members of the commission.

Chairperson Galvin commented on emails communications commissioners had received from Becky Dennis and Jocelyn Combs and asked about a third email mention by Ms. Clark from a joint group. Ms. Clark indicated she would forward the third email to Mr. Hernandez who can then forward it to members

of the commission. She apologized for not sending this prior to this meeting.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked Ms. Dennis to provide additional information on her comment regarding “air rights” stating she was unfamiliar with this term. Ms. Dennis advised that it is something that has been done a lot on the East Coast, mainly New York, where housing units are built above existing parking areas and she thought it might be possible over the BART parking area. She noted that it likely would not generate a lot of affordable housing because it might be expensive to build but would generate moderate income housing which is something Pleasanton also needs.

Ms. Dennis indicated she would be happy to share what information she has on “air rights” with the commission and thought perhaps the City could contact someone who would be able to provide additional information. Chairperson Galvin commented on new creative parking being done in San Ramon on roof tops.

Commissioner Kiziloglu then asked Ms. Dennis for information on her suggestion pertaining to converting hotels to affordable housing. Ms. Dennis stated that she felt if a hotel did not come to pass that the city could perhaps work with hotel developers on converting sites to affordable housing sites and be able to build some attractive low-income housing for service workers. She commented on tax revenue from hotels being an important factor for the city which would need to be considered but thought the Costco site should not be considered as a suitable location for affordable housing.

Ms. Dennis discussed city-owned properties with Commissioner Kiziloglu, noting that changes to the Bernal property would require voter approval since when that property was approved, it was approved with a requirement that no additional housing be considered, other than what was already approved. However, she felt it would worthwhile putting it into the mix of all to be considered.

Commissioner Kiziloglu was informed by Ms. Dennis that after considering the Pleasanton Specific Plan for East Pleasanton and looking at numerous options, she felt it was going to be very expensive to develop the site because it lacked infrastructure and would therefore make it suitable only for the development of high-end housing or other commercial entities. She commented on solar information she has sent to City Council that included details about habitat restoration under solar with small animal grazing.

Commissioner Soby commented on letters commissioners had received from Ms. Dennis and Ms. Combs that pertain to proposals for different sites. He felt that what was being asked of the commission at this meeting was to develop ranking criteria for evaluating sites and with this in mind thought the commission not be considering information from the letters until sites are to be ranked.

Chairperson Galvin asked about the process for moving forward at this meeting and Ms. Clark suggested commissioners consider the seven scoring categories outlined in her presentation and present any questions or concerns for staff to answer. She noted that at this time staff has not brought forward any sites for the commission to consider and what was being asked was for commissioners to provide input on criteria that can be used once all potential sites have been identified. Ms. Clark reiterated that this is the first pass at considering criteria and the information will also be considered by the Planning Commission, City Council, and the public who will also have the opportunity to review and provide criteria comments.

Commissioner Kiziloglu questioned if the commission should be providing information and ranking on sites that could potentially be located. Ms. Clark advised this was not required and what staff was looking for is evaluation parameters for sites when a list of sites is to be brought forward, what is needed now should be in terms of principles and ideas to be used as a guidance.

Ms. Clark informed Chairperson Galvin that no map of sites is currently available and agreed with the Chair that what was needed at this meeting was for the commission to consider the seven categories

and criteria listed under each of them.

Commissioner Fischer questioned if at some time demographics would be determined when creating housing units. For example, criteria for seniors 55+ that would not be as relevant as those for others. She asked when these demographics would come into play and when the commission would receive information about this. Ms. Clark noted that the next task for staff would be to bring forward background analysis providing details about housing needs for different groups. She felt it unlikely that sites would be recognized and targeted for different types of housing.

In moving forward Ms. Clark asked commissioners to consider Category 1 – Site Size and Infill Criteria. Commissioner Duggan asked for clarification on what was stated in 1a and 1b, and Ms. Clark provided information on how point scoring is done by the state depending on site criteria.

With reference to item 1d Commissioner Soby felt something should be included about the feasibility of being able to build costs and whether something can be built by a developer or a nonprofit. He noted that 3,500 units have been identified from the previous Housing Element meaning an additional 2,465 units need to be built. Ms. Clark advised that when a roster of sites is available will be the time an analysis will be needed to consider site capacities and constraints. Commissioner Soby asked about the 3,500 carry-over units and Ms. Clark indicated these sites would need to be redocumented and evaluated to confirm their feasibility.

Commissioner Duggan questioned Ms. Clark on whether there was anything the commission should be considering whether a site is already clear, for example empty acreage versus something with a structure that could be converted. Ms. Clark agreed that was something that would need to be considered but noted that Pleasanton does not have many vacant sites left. She informed Commissioner Kiziloglu about the weighting of criteria and the fact that there are property owners in Pleasanton who want to build high density residential developments.

Commissioner Kripalani commented on Category 1 dealing only with site size and questioned whether it is presumed these sites will have all requisite infrastructure. Ms. Clark advised the sites don't necessarily have to have these requirements to be considered viable sites but would need to be within the urban growth boundary.

Moving to Category 2, Ms. Clark she noted the criteria identifies transit-related sites that are within walking distance of bus stops, adjacent to bike lanes, or near a freeway. Commissioner Kiziloglu commented on the bus and BART routes indicated in this category.

Commissioner Fischer felt items 2a and 2b were redundant if 3/4ths of mile walking to a BART station was a reasonable distance. Ms. Clark commented on point scoring and indicated the reason for items 2a and 2b was that they allowed for extra point credits. Commissioner Fischer discussed the 1/2-mile consideration being given for people getting on the freeway noting that most Pleasanton residents live more than 1/2-mile from a freeway. Ms. Clark confirmed with Mr. Dolan that this was included for being able to give people convenient access to the freeway so they are not contributing to town traffic.

Commissioner Kripalani indicated he had been perplexed about the point system and asked Ms. Clark to provide more detail about this point system. Ms. Clark provided information about this system and that from a planning perspective, noting reasons included environmental and competitive funding for affordable housing projects. She added that if affordable housing is not placed near transit people will be required to drive which impacts traffic.

Chairperson Galvin commented on San Ramon and Livermore housing projects and a Dublin self-driving bus project with LVTA. He discussed the importance of looking to the future and new technologies.

Commissioner Duggan agreed with having sites close to transportation but felt Pleasanton's public infrastructure for transportation was awful and other things needed to also be considered. She felt limiting criteria to being 3/4ths of a mile to BART was limiting where sites could be. Commissioner Duggan noted the omission of the ACE train station and felt this needed to be included as a criteria. She felt transportation was an important factor to be considered but is different now because of other factors such as ridesharing, etc. Ms. Clark questioned whether Commissioner Duggan felt the trends were being over-emphasized in the criteria. Commissioner Duggan agreed and felt a mile was a walkable distance and that the ACE train needed to be included.

Mr. Dolan indicated ACE train had not been called out in the criteria because there were not enough trains to be considered. Commissioner Duggan stated that the City of Pleasanton should be taking into consideration that transportation concerns will likely follow housing. For example, bus routes will be put in place after housing has been built.

Mr. Dolan commented on the half-mile standard being in place because it is included in the tax credit criteria, and Ms. Clark noted it was a walking distance that most people would tolerate, especially in weather conditions, and is also a distance that is acceptable in the planning world.

Chairperson Galvin commented on trying to take into consideration what will be needed for homes that will be built in the next 5-10 years but be in existence for 50+ years. He felt it important not to lose sight of what will be needed in the future. Ms. Clark noted that transportation was only one of many factors that needed to be considered.

Commissioner Soby asked Ms. Clark for a definition of the term "bike facility". Ms. Clark advised that it covers various classes of bike facilities from narrow bike lanes to street bike routes. She advised that more detail was provided in the agenda packet that commissioners should read.

In reviewing Categories 3 and 4 Commissioner Duggan commented on housing sites near schools noting that Pleasanton has nine elementary schools and thought that criteria distance for middle schools should be changed from the 1/2-mile to 1-mile. Mr. Dolan questioned whether middle school students would walk a mile and Commissioner Duggan advised that many already walk that distance, and Commissioner Fischer noted that they also ride bicycles.

Commissioner Duggan discussed the distance of homes to current middle schools, and Chairperson Galvin commented on the future need of additional schools. Ms. Clark noted that city staff have been working with the school district to determine needs and have learned that several schools already have too many students. She then provided commissioners information on how points are achieved when school/park boundaries are considered.

Commissioner Kiziloglu referenced the importance of 3b, c and d but felt the needs of people living in condensed, confined spaces also needed to be considered and was an important criteria for her.

Ms. Clark reviewed with commissioners the multiple points under Categories 5, 6 and 7 that included noise exposure, air quality, emergency response, natural hazards, etc. She provided Commissioner Soby information about buffering distances from high use streets and roads as well as associated health hazards.

Chairperson Galvin was advised by Ms. Clark that staff would not be providing GI maps but will be overlaying possible sites on other maps and will be comparing the quality of sites against each other. She noted that to develop a project two things will take place, one will be a CEQA analysis, and secondarily additional mitigation may be required.

Commissioner Duggan discussed criteria issues with Ms. Clark pertaining to sites that may already have existing utilities or water access. Ms. Clark advised that water supply assessments would be

conducted to determine demand increment, and this would be discussed with the developer.

Commissioner Duggan asked about steps that will be taken to make buildings more efficient. Ms. Clark noted that looking at energy efficiency will be one of the policy considerations for the Housing Element, and Mr. Dolan advised that will not happen until a development proposal has been submitted.

Commissioner Kiziloglu was provided details by Ms. Clark on some of the Pleasanton areas that are within the Hundred-Year Flood Zone area.

Commissioner Fischer questioned who defines what significance is going to be used to determine a lot size or other items. Ms. Clark advised several resources would be taken into consideration including a broad survey of things for environmental criteria. Commissioner Fischer indicated her question was more about tree removal indicated in Category 5 and how that would be determined, and Ms. Clark stated appropriate assessments would be, and the city's code on heritage trees would be considered.

Commissioner Kripalani asked about consideration being given to a site location if it was close to a historic resource. Mr. Dolan stated consideration would be given such sites, but consideration would need to be made on whether building on the site would impact or require demolition of the historic resource. Ms. Clark noted there are numerous historical homes in the downtown area.

Commissioner Kiziloglu commented on Category 6 regarding height and mass compatibility and whether this was indicating RHNA requirements or those of the City of Pleasanton. Ms. Clark advised they were standards that exist in the City of Pleasanton's Downtown Specific Plan and not a state requirement. She noted that when this list was shown to consultants, they had indicated that many difficult decisions will be made throughout the process. Commissioner Duggan commented on other review processes and guidelines that are conducted and considered by the city when projects are being considered. She also commented on looking at sites that are existing commercial sites near freeways that might be good housing opportunities.

Commissioner Soby discussed with Ms. Clark criteria that had been carried over from the previous housing cycle. She commented on neighborhood scale streets and homes across from smaller local streets.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked what criteria needed to be considered now that the commission has a better understanding of the whole process. Dave Bergman stated the consultants are aware of the non-standard development process of Pleasanton that is a hallmark of the development, and that history is an important part of the communities identify. He noted that other places have more static zoning and are less likely to rely on planned unit development for guiding growth and development.

Mr. Bergman advised that meeting California housing element laws is a technical and specific process that will allow Pleasanton to maintain its preferred ways of being able to control growth and development when evaluating applications. He noted that the analysis process is good but will not be the final discussion on sites but offers an approach for fitting into the standardized requirements of the state's housing element law. Mr. Bergman informed commissioners the Pleasanton approach was different than other communities which means different tools must be used to identify sites.

Commissioner Soby questioned how floor area ratio was calculated, and Ms. Clark advised that it is the ratio between the parcel square footage and that of the building on the site. She commented on tools the city will use to identify sites and property owners that staff knows are interested in having their properties included as viable sites. Commissioner Duggan was advised that these also include faith-based places.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked if the city's policy was not to work on the affordable housing aspect until the next RHNA cycle or the next big development. She stated she was surprised to learn at this

meeting that the city has been approached by multiple developers ready to build but had decided not to pursue this at this time. Ms. Clark advised that the city is continuing to process permits for sites that have zoning for housing, and the sites where rezoning is required are going through a deliberate consideration process.

Chairperson Galvin discussed the possibility of building smaller units as is being done in San Ramon and other cities and the need for being able to retain units as rentals and not having them sold later as condos. Ms. Dolan advised that the city has a Condominium Conversion Ordinance, but nothing has been processed for over thirteen years. He commented on market conditions, apartments that are built with the intent of making them condos, and changes to density Mr. Dolan further commented on an important policy piece in the Housing Element pertaining to preserving the existing rental housing stock.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked to address smaller units in the process such as townhouses, so people such as first-time buyers would have the opportunity to purchase units. Ms. Clark indicated this is a theme that has been raised at recent meetings, and some cities have been proactively doing this. She noted recent city projects have included some mix of studios, and there is a product that the market wants to see built, also several people have been building the ADU's.

Commissioner Soby asked site ranking modifications and aligning them until developers propose projects. Ms. Clark advised that the next steps are to take this to the Planning Commission and then to City Council who will have the final word on this list of criteria. She discussed the broader discussions that will take place and that what is taking place now is the first step noting that once criteria have been applied sites will be ranked.

Commissioners were informed by Ms. Clark that as things proceed and more criteria is collected additional details will be brought back to this commission for consideration. Mr. Hernandez agreed stating background reports will be provided to the commission.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m. by unanimous consent.